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HOUSE PASSED DEFENSE BILL BENEFITS CONNECTICUT, FIRST DISTRICT

House Passes Defense Authorization Bill with Strong Support for CT Defense Industry

WASHINGTON- Today Congressman John B. Larson voted in favor of the Department of Defense Authorization bill (H.R. 1585) for Fiscal Year 2008 which passed the House this afternoon. The bill makes a commitment to strengthen our military and strained National Guard, fight the real war on terror in Afghanistan, and support our troops on the ground and when they return home.

"While I have been a steadfast opponent of this war from the outset, our men and women in combat deserve our full support," said Larson. "Everyday we are working to bring this war to an end. Although the President has let his hubris and arrogance get in the way of protecting our men and women in Iraq, we will not leave our troops in the battlefield go without the equipment and protection that they need. We also address our strained National Guard, give our men and women in uniform a much deserved pay raise, ensure that they receive first rate healthcare. We also require accountability on the conduct of the Iraq war and strengthen our focus on the real war on terror in Afghanistan."

Overall, the bill provides over \$503.8 billion in funding, which includes \$141.8 billion in funding for the ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. It also provides funds to address our military readiness, which includes the establishment of a strategic readiness fund; builds up the strained National Guard and Reserve; provides much needed military equipment and training for our troops; improves protection our troops on the ground; gives the military a much deserved pay raise; and upgrades our military healthcare system. The bill also fully supports the goals of the National Nuclear Security Administration's non-proliferation programs and the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, both of which are consistent with the 9-11 Commission recommendations.

“Connecticut plays a vital role in our nation’s defense, providing not only the men and women who serve in the armed forces, but the equipment to fight with and bring them safely home. These programs are important to both the safety of our troops and Connecticut’s economy,” added Larson.

The Department of Defense Authorization bill includes the following projects that are important to Connecticut and the first district:

- **\$29.4 million** for 42 F-16 engine upgrades
- **\$8.0 million** for Universal Control
- **\$770.8 million** for 52 H-60 Blackhawk Helicopters
- **\$511.5 million** for 21 MH-60S Knight Hawk Helicopters
- **\$1.05 billion** for 33 MH-60R Sea Hawk Helicopters
- **\$3.2 billion** for 20 F-22 Raptors, including \$1.9 billion for continued research and development
- **\$2.4 billion** for 12 F-35 Joint Strike Fighters, including \$3.5 billion for additional research and development
- **\$2.7 billion** for the C-17 Globemasters
- **\$13.6 billion** in military construction for a CT Army National Guard Readiness Center in Niantic
- **\$2.65 billion** for one Virginia class submarine in 2008, \$702.7 million for advanced procurement of another in 2009 and \$224 million in further research and development

- **\$588 million** to procure the initial components for an additional Virginia-class sub, which enables Congress to increase submarine production to 2 per year prior to the Navy’s projection in 2012.

The bill passed today in the House must now go to the Senate for approval and must be signed by the President.

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